

(97-11)

RADIO SCRIPT OF SENATOR THURMOND FOR HIS REGULAR WEEKLY BROADCAST,  
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MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

Let me talk with you today about the situation which has developed in the Senate/during the past week as debate has been going on/as to whether the so-called civil rights bills shall be considered.

This particular bill is one which was passed by the House of Representatives and placed on the calendar of the Senate, as I have pointed out previously, by the highly unusual application of a rule not ordinarily used in such a manner. Then, when Senator Knowland, Republican leader in the Senate, moved to bring the bill up for consideration, the debate started.

Those of us on the Southern side of the legislative fight/have pointed out that the bill should not have been placed on the calendar in the way it was; and that the bill is unnecessary in all respects and unconstitutional in many.

Senator Russell of Georgia, who has been in the Senate since January 12, 1933 -- longer than any Senator except Senator Hayden of Arizona, who became a member in 1927 -- is the co-ordinator of all efforts and strategy of the Southern group. We have been meeting from time to time/to plan the best course to be followed.

Prior to Senator Russell's meeting with the President, our group gave considerable thought to whether it would be best for a Committee to talk with the President/or for Senator Russell to go alone. In the interest of trying to present our views to the President in the best way possible/and with <sup>the</sup> least fan-fare, it was decided that one representative of our group should go to the White House.



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The President listened for nearly an hour/and Senator Russell indicated that the President would be willing to accept a weaker bill than the one passed by the House. However, this has not given us much encouragement/because the important thing is that the bill not be passed in any form.

As a matter of fact, I am not sure that the Senators advocating this vicious piece of legislation/would be deterred in their desire to impose the provisions of this bill on the South — even if the President were to decide that it should not be approved. While the views of the President might affect the actions of some conservative Republicans in the Senate, I am sure that what he has to say about the bill will not affect Northern Democratic Senators/such as Douglas of Illinois and Humphrey of Minnesota.

What this boils down to/is that the South cannot expect any assistance from either of the two national political parties.

The greatest encouragement we Southerners in the Senate have from any source — other than our own determination to fight the bill to the bitter end — is that a few Democrats and also a few Republicans, who would vote for passage of the bill, will vote with us for an amendment to guarantee trial by jury. *and to prevent the use of troops for enforcement.* But our hope is that we can prolong the debate until we convince our opponents/that it would be bad for the country/or until we out-last them.

Since there is little hope that we can convince the advocates of the bill that it would be bad — not only for the South, but also for the entire country — we must rely on our stamina to debate longer than they do.

Practically everything else has stopped in the Senate during this



debate over the so-called civil rights bill, except the meeting of Committees. However, even the work being done in Committees has slowed down as everybody is devoting themselves to preparation for the continuing legislative battle.

At this stage of the debate, it is impossible to predict how long the fight will last.

I hope that every citizen of the South — and of the Nation — will realize the importance of this fight to the preservation of constitutional government in the United States. This is a continuation of the fight which started with the Supreme Court's decision in the school segregation cases. The advocates of this bill want to impose even harsher terms on the South than the decision of the Court imposes.

I am doing my best to keep this from happening.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington. Thank you for listening and this station for making this time available each week.

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